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protocol, a concierge service protocol, a lottery service protocol and a money transfer service protocol. A physical interface for the one or more communication ports may be selected from the group consisting of RS-422/485, Fiber Optic, RS-232, DCS Current Loop, Link Progressive Current Loop, FIREWIRE, Ethernet and USB. Also, the one or more communication ports may comprise a first communication port that receives and sends messages from a first game service server and a second communication port that receives and send messages from a second game service server where the communication between the gaming machine and the one or more game servers may be encrypted. The one or more game service servers may be selected from the group consisting of a prize server, a game server, an entertainment content server, a cashless ticketing server, progressive game server, a bonus game server, a concierge service server, a lottery server and a money transfer server.

At page 8, first full paragraph, please substitute the following paragraph,

A2
In specific embodiments, the second communication protocol may be a TCP/IP communication protocol and the native communication protocol may be selected from the group consisting of a progressive game service protocol, a bonus game service protocol, a player tracking service protocol, a cashless ticketing service protocol, a game downloading service protocol, a prize service protocol, an entertainment content service protocol, a concierge service protocol, a lottery service protocol and a money transfer service protocol. A physical interface for the one or more communication ports may be selected from the group consisting of RS-422/485, Fiber Optic, RS-232, DCS Current Loop, Link Progressive Current Loop, FIREWIRE, Ethernet and USB. The one or more communication ports may comprise 8 to 16 communication ports.

At page 12, second full paragraph:

A3
RS-422/485, Fiber Optic, RS-232, DCS Current Loop, Link Progressive Current Loop, FIREWIRE, Ethernet and USB are examples of physical interfaces with associated physical communication protocols which may be utilized on one of the game service interfaces 302. RS-422/485 and RS-232 are serial communication protocols established by the Institute of Electronic and Electrical Engineers (IEEE). DCS Current Loop and Link Progressive Current Loop are proprietary communication standards developed by International Gaming Technology, Reno, NV. Universal Serial Bus (USB) (Communication protocol standards by the USB-IF, Portland, Oregon, <http://www.usb.org>) is a standard serial communication methodology used in the personal computer industry. FIREWIRE is a cross-platform implementation of the high-speed serial data bus (defined by IEEE Standard 1394-1995) that can move large amounts of data between computers and peripheral devices.

At Page 14 last paragraph, please substitute the following paragraph.

A4
In one embodiment, the communication multiplexer device 304 receives messages from the gaming machine 2 (sent to an appropriate game service server) at four communication ports on the communication multiplexer device (see FIG. 5A) where each communication port is connected one of the game service network interfaces 302. The four communication ports are configured to be compatible with the physical interface and physical communication protocol of each game service network interface connected to the port such that the message may be received in a native communication protocol used by the gaming machine. For this invention, the number of game service servers, game service network interfaces and communication ports may vary (e.g. 16 game service servers, 16 game service network interfaces and 16 communication ports 303) and is not limited to four of each.

In the abstract, please substitute the following paragraph,

A5
A gaming machine with a communication multiplexer device that allows communications between the gaming machine and one or more game service servers all within a single network interface is described. The single network interface may be a wireless or wired network interface. The communication multiplexer device converts messages in native communication protocols used by the gaming machine to a network communication protocol such as TCP/IP for transmission over the single wired or wireless network interface. The communication multiplexer is designed such that the gaming machine may receive messages that have been transmitted using the native communication protocols without modifying regulated gaming software on the gaming machine.

IN THE DRAWINGS:

A proposed drawing correction to FIG. 3 with highlighted corrections has been included in the reply to the office action.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Marked-up versions of the amended claims have been reproduced below in an appendix A on a separate page. All the pending claims have been reproduced in the appendix for the convenience of the examiner. The amended claims below are "clean," having no underlining or brackets. Please substitute the clean versions of claims 1, 7, 8, 10, 11, 16, 17, 29, 30, 31, 34, 36, 37 and 38.

Sub. B1>

1. (Amended) A gaming machine comprising:

a master gaming controller designed or configured to control a game played on the gaming machine wherein each game played on the gaming machine includes receiving a wager for the game, determining the game outcome and the presenting the game outcome and to communicate with one or more game service servers wherein each game service server provides at least one game service;

a communication multiplexer device connected to the master gaming controller wherein the communication multiplexer device is transparent to the master gaming controller in its communications with the one or more game service servers, the communication multiplexer device comprising

(i) a plurality of communication ports wherein each communication port is capable of transmitting and receiving messages with the master gaming controller using a native communication protocol,

(ii) an output communication port for transmitting and for receiving messages with the one or more game service servers using a second communication protocol, and

(iii) processor logic that multiplexes and demultiplexes messages between the plurality of communication ports and the output communication port and that converts between the native communication protocol and the second communication protocol; and

a network interface connected to the output communication port that receives and transmits messages using the second communication protocol.

7. (Amended) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the plurality of communication ports comprises a first communication port using a first native communication protocol a second communication port using a second native communication protocol.

8. (Amended) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the plurality of communication ports comprises a first communication port that receives and sends messages from a first game service server and a second communication port that receives and send messages from a second game service server.

10. (Amended) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the processor logic is capable of configuring each of the plurality of communication ports to emulate a native communication protocol.

11. (Amended) The gaming machine of claim 10, wherein the communication multiplexer communication device is capable of communicating with a boot server to determine the native communication protocol to be used on each of the plurality of communication ports.

16. (Amended) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein a physical interface of the one or more communication ports is selected from the group consisting of RS-422/485, Fiber Optic, RS-232, DCS Current Loop, Link Progressive Current Loop, IEEE (Institute of Electronic and Electrical Engineers) 1394-compatible, Ethernet and USB (Universal Serial BUS)-compatible.

Sub. B2> 17. (Amended) A multiplexer communication device for multiplexing communications between a master gaming controller on a gaming machine and one or more game service servers, the multiplexer communication device comprising:

A9 a plurality of communication ports wherein each communication port transmits and receives messages between the gaming machine and the multiplexer communication device in a native communication protocol;

a multi-port communication board allowing each communication port to be configured to accept multiple native communication protocols;

an output communication port that transmits messages addressed to one or more game servers and receives messages from one or more game service servers addressed to one of the plurality of communication ports using a second communication protocol; and

processor logic that is capable of multiplexing and demultiplexing messages between the plurality of communication ports and the output communication port and that converts between the native communication protocol and the second communication protocol wherein the communication multiplexer device is transparent to the master gaming controller in its communications with the one or more game service servers.

A10 27. (Amended) The communication multiplexer device of claim 17, wherein a physical interface of the one or more communication ports is selected from the group consisting of RS-422/485, Fiber Optic, RS-232, DCS Current Loop, Link Progressive Current Loop, IEEE (Institute of Electronic and Electrical Engineers) 1394-compatible, Ethernet and USB (Universal Serial BUS)-compatible.

29. (Amended) The communication multiplexer device of claim 17, wherein the plurality of communication ports comprise 8 communication ports.

30. (Amended) The communication multiplexer device of claim 17, wherein the plurality of communication ports comprise 16 communication ports.

A15 Sub. B3> 31. (Amended) A method of providing communications between master gaming controller on a gaming machine and one or more game service servers in a communication

multiplexer device connected to the gaming machine and the one or more game service servers, the method comprising:

establishing communications with a boot server located outside of the communication multiplexer device;

initializing one or more of a plurality of communication ports on the communications multiplexer device wherein each of the initialized communication ports is connected to a game service network interface on the gaming machine;

mapping each of the initialized communication ports to a port game service server;

configuring each of the one or communication ports to accept a native communication protocol used by the master gaming controller on the gaming machine for communications over the game service network interface with the port game service server wherein the communication multiplexer device is transparent to the master gaming controller;;

establishing a communication connection between each communication port and the port game service server;

receiving a message from the master gaming controller via a first initialized communication port in the native communication protocol used on the first initialized communication port and

transmitting the message using a second communication protocol different from the native communication protocol to the port game service server mapped to the first initialized communication port.

34. (Amended) The method of claim 31, further comprising:

converting messages from the gaming machine in the native communication protocol received at one of the initialized communication ports to the second communication protocol; and

transmitting the messages in the second communication protocol to the port game service server.

35. (Amended) The method of claim 31, further comprising:

converting messages from the port game server addressed to one of the initialized communication ports in the second communication protocol to the native communication protocol of the communication port; and

transmitting the messages in the native communication protocol via the initialized communication port to the master gaming controller on the gaming machine.

37. (Amended) The method of claim 31, further comprising:

receiving a message from the gaming machine at one of the initialized communication ports;